



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Leading social care provider celebrates 21 Years of Employee Ownership and hails huge socio-economic benefit on the Highland region**

*Key takeaways:*

- \* *Since 2004...*
- \* *HHC has employed well over 2,000 individuals across the Highlands*
- \* *Delivered more than 6 million hours of care and support*
- \* *Paid more than £77 million in net wages to its employees*
- \* *Since 2004, 2.7 million free shares have been distributed to employees - with nearly half cashed in, providing over £550,000 in tax-free or tax-efficient income*
- \* *Approx. 20 employee elected directors have helped shape the direction of the organisation, delivering Fair Work and democracy in the workplace.*

On Friday 03 October **Highland Home Carers (HHC)**, the Highlands' leading adult social care organisation, celebrated 21 years of Employee Ownership with an event at its HQ & Learning / Training Centre at 1 Highlander Way, Inverness.

Since 2004, when HHC formed as an Employee Owned Organisation and Social Enterprise, more than 2,000 people have worked for HHC in the adult social care sector in the Highlands. Commissioned by NHS Highland, HHC delivers a diverse range of services, tailored to support adults with care and support needs, spanning across many Highland communities.

#### **Strengthening the Highland economy**

Recognising the importance of the adult social care sector to the Highlands, HHC Managing Director, Campbell Mair, analyses the economic and social value of HHC over their 21 years of operating as an Employee Owned Social Enterprise:

*“We are incredibly proud to have blazed a trail in the Highlands and delighted to mark our 21st year under employee ownership. In that time we have employed well over 2,000 individuals, building a dedicated workforce rooted in the Highlands, with approximately 20 employee elected directors having helped shape the direction of the organisation, delivering Fair Work and democracy in the workplace.*

*“We are immensely proud of the work we do, the lives that we have impacted so positively, and the enormous contribution that we have made to the Highland economy. Since 2004, HHC has paid more than £77 million in net wages to its employees - all of whom live locally in the*

*Highlands, strengthening the regional economy and supporting thousands of households across our communities.*

*“Additionally, as part of our employee ownership model, 2.7 million free shares have been distributed to employees, with nearly half of these have been cashed in, providing employees with over £550,000 in tax-free or tax-efficient income - a tangible reward for their contribution and commitment.”*

Lucy Wilson, Care Practitioner, based in Inverness, and one of HHC’s three current Employee Elected Directors adds:

*“I am so pleased and proud to be a Director of the Company. It s a great opportunity to contribute, have an effective voice, and learn. I d encourage anyone who has this kind of opportunity to become involved.”*

HHC has contributed over £20 million in PAYE to HMRC, since 2004, with £6.5 million of this in employer National Insurance contributions, reinforcing its role in funding public services and infrastructure.

### **Growing demand for social care**

Touching all of our lives, the demand for social care is expected to grow in Highland and across the UK overall, as the number of people aged over 85 is projected to grow by 62% by 2037 (Office for National Statistics, 2024). Similarly, the number of people aged over 65 in Scotland is projected to increase by almost a third by mid-2045 (National Records of Scotland, 2023).

To date, under employee ownership, HHC has delivered more than 6 million hours of care and support - equivalent to almost 800 hours every single day to people across the Highlands. This translates to around 12 million individual episodes of care, provided to people in their own homes. And that demand will only grow.

*Celebrating our 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday is an opportunity to improve public understanding, as well as reframe social care as an essential social and economic investment in Highland,”* adds Mair. *“As well as the direct and indirect effects leading to a rise in household income, HHC, and our contributions across the Highland economy, also create a wide range of benefits that are not captured in Gross Value Added or employment measures, such as the wellbeing of adults receiving care and support, and peace of mind for the general population.*

*“Indeed, the magnitude of these socioeconomic impacts means that for every £1 spent, there are £1.98 in socioeconomic benefits.”*

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